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NEWS RELEASE

Nov. 13, 1998

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HABITAT FOR HUMANITY, UM JOIN FORCES FOR 'MESSIAH'

MISSOULA--

Hallelujah! The third annual "Messiah" concert sponsored by the Habitat for Humanity will take the stage at The University of Montana's University Theatre Sunday, Nov. 29.

The performance of Handel's famous oratorio will begin at 7:30 p.m. It is free, but contributions will be accepted at the door.

A fund-raiser for Habitat construction projects in the coming year, the production will feature professional soloists and instrumentalists joined by a choir of more than 100 people of all ages. Singers who want to participate can sign up by calling Habitat for Humanity at 549-8210. Pledge sheets also are available at many Missoula churches and Morgenroth Music Center, 3014 Brooks St.

"We need singers to fill our spirited chorus, and you can join by pledging at least \$50 - \$35 if a student," said UM music Visiting Assistant Professor Nancy Cook, who is putting the program together. "It is really an unbelievable experience to participate in the chorus. With only one full rehearsal, the singers do a tremendous job each year."

Conductor will be Dean Peterson, director of choirs at Hellgate High School and the recipient of the 1997 Milken Award for excellence in teaching. New soloists this year include soprano Dawn Douglass and tenor Gary Funk. Joining them on stage will be a 30-player orchestra and returning soloists Esther England, alto, and Stephen Kalm, baritone.

- more -

The concert is Habitat's major fund-raiser for the year. In the past two years, the concerts raised more than \$20,000 to build houses with needy, hard-working Missoula families. This year Habitat completed its 10th home and in 1999 will begin construction of town houses on Defoe Street and a house on Poplar Street. Recently built homes are located at the corner of Waverly and Cooley streets.

Habitat selects partnering families on the basis of need and the ability to repay a simple no-interest loan and invest at least 500 hours of "sweat equity" into their home or that of another family. Eight new families became partners with Habitat this past summer.

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Messiah.rl